



## OFFICE OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

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Linda McCulloch  
Superintendent

**October 1, 2003**

To: OPI MASS Representatives

From: Madalyn Quinlan, Chief of Staff

Subject: Summary of OPI Activities for October 2003

Here is a summary of the current activities at the Office of Public Instruction for October 2003. This summary can also be found at [www.opi.state.mt.us/MASSUpdates/](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/MASSUpdates/).

### Office of the State Superintendent

#### **Highlights of State Superintendent Linda McCulloch's Activities for the September 2003:**

- ☐ Read to students at Rossiter Elementary School in Helena
- ☐ Released information and results to the public for the IOWA tests and Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), as required by the No Child Left Behind Law
- ☐ Met with higher education leaders Sheila Stearns, Commissioner of Higher Education and Paul Rowland, Dean of the School of Education at the University of Montana
- ☐ As board member, participated in:
  - o Board of Public Education meeting in Missoula and Polson
  - o Board of Education Meeting in Missoula
  - o State Land Board meeting
  - o Montana Heritage Project Board of Directors Meeting
  - o School Renewal Commission meeting
- ☐ Participated in the Teacher PIR day in Polson as part of the Board of Public Education meeting
- ☐ Delivered speeches to:
  - o Montana Teachers Forum
  - o Montana PTA State Convention delegates
- ☐ Presented monetary awards to eight (8) Montana National Board Certified Teachers
- ☐ Traveled to China as part of the first U.S.–China education leaders meeting hosted by the Chinese Ministry of Education to explore programs for cooperation and exchange. While in China, the delegation traveled to Beijing, Shanghai and Xi'An. The delegation included six chief state school officers, leaders of national education organizations and governors' education representatives.
- ☐ Participated in media interviews and radio talk shows regarding NCLB
- ☐ Participated in the meeting of the Montana Advisory Council for Indian Education (MACIE)
- ☐ Was deposed by attorneys representing the Montana Quality Education Coalition
- ☐ Appointed members to the Special Education Advisory Committee

#### **OPI's Yellow School Bus Tour**

State Superintendent Linda McCulloch and her staff are warming up the engine for the fall Yellow School Bus Tour headed toward northeast Montana. The tour is scheduled for October

20-24 to Glendive, Sidney, Poplar and Glasgow. The Yellow School Bus Tour is an informal way for OPI staff to listen and learn about the current situations and diverse needs of educators across Montana. If you would like more information, contact OPI Tour coordinator, Jan Lombardi at [jlombardi@state.mt.us](mailto:jlombardi@state.mt.us) or 444-1641.

### **Directory of Montana Schools**

Printed copies of the 2003-2004 Directory of Montana Schools are available for \$11.50 each, including shipping and handling by contacting:

Advanced Litho Printing  
226 9th Ave. S.  
Great Falls, MT 59405-4034  
(406) 453-0393  
FAX (406) 454-1271

The Portable Document File (PDF) of the 2004 Directory is now available on our web site at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/Directory/>.

### **Montana K-12 Public School Renewal Commission**

The 2003 Legislature passed [HB 736](#) establishing a commission to propose changes and new provisions regarding K-12 public education in Montana. The renewal commission will submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the education and local government interim committee by September 15, 2004. State Superintendent Linda McCulloch serves on the 28-member commission. Information regarding membership, meetings and resources is available on the web: <http://www.discoveringmontana.com/gov2/css/boards/renewal/default.asp>.

Questions and public comments may be directed to: Kris Goss, Education Policy Advisor and Deputy Communications Director, Office of the Governor, at 406-444-3862 or [kgoss@state.mt.us](mailto:kgoss@state.mt.us). OPI Contact: Madalyn Quinlan, [mquinlan@state.mt.us](mailto:mquinlan@state.mt.us) or 406-444-3168.

### **Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Webpage**

States along the Lewis and Clark trail are recognizing the journey with celebrations, and classrooms are learning of their adventures. OPI has created a [Lewis and Clark Bicentennial webpage](#) to provide easy access to educational material and information about their expedition. Superintendent McCulloch encourages schools to explore Lewis and Clark's journey through Montana and especially their encounters with American Indians. OPI Contacts: Jan Lombardi, Education Projects at [jlombardi@state.mt.us](mailto:jlombardi@state.mt.us) or 444-1641 or Janet Andrew, Internet Services, at [jandrew@state.mt.us](mailto:jandrew@state.mt.us) or 444-2765.

### **Two Montana Schools Recognized as Blue Ribbon Schools**

On September 17, US Secretary of Education Rod Paige named Plentywood 7-8 and Twin Bridges High School as Blue Ribbon Schools. These two Montana schools were honored along with more than 210 public and private elementary and secondary schools, from 38 states and the District of Columbia, as the first No Child Left Behind Blue Ribbon Schools. The renewed program recognizes schools that make significant progress in closing the achievement gap (schools with at least 40 percent of their students from disadvantaged backgrounds that dramatically improve student performance to a high level on state assessments or national norm-referenced assessments) or achieve at very high levels (schools whose students, regardless of background, achieve in the top 10 percent on state assessments). The winners will be honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., on October 30-31. Congratulations to the staff and students at Plentywood 7-8 and Twin Bridges High School!

### **September Board of Public Education Meeting**

The OPI staff presented a variety of reports at the September Board of Public Education meeting in Missoula. Reports included State Superintendent McCulloch's, Assessment update, No Child Left Behind update and licensure issues regarding "web based universities." The Board added the licensure section of Chapter 57 to the study being conducted on Chapter 58. Contacts are Board of Public Education Executive Secretary Steve Meloy (406) 444-6576 or Deputy Superintendent Spencer Sartorius (406) 444-4434.

### **November Board of Public Education Meeting**

The Board of Public Education will hold its next regular meeting November 13-14, 2003, in the conference room at the Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education (OCHE) building 2500 Broadway, Helena, Montana. Tentative BPE agenda items the OPI will be involved with include an assessment update, a NCLB update, annual Renewal Unit Provider Report and progress on the Education Profile. Contacts are Board of Public Education Executive Secretary Steve Meloy (406) 444-6576 or Deputy Superintendent Spencer Sartorius (406) 444-4434.

### OPI Legal Unit

**Montana School Law Books** The 2003 Montana School Law books for 2003 have arrived at OPI. We are now shipping to schools that have pre-ordered. The 2003 Law book may be purchased for \$10 by filling out the order form located at:

<http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/legaldivision/schoollaworderform.pdf>. Send the completed order form and payment (check, money order, or purchase order) to OPI at PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501. OPI Contact: Beverly Marlow at 444-3172, [bemarlow@state.mt.us](mailto:bemarlow@state.mt.us).

### **OPI Teams Up with County Superintendents to Provide Guidance for Territory Transfers**

The 2003 Legislature adopted Senate Bill 16, which completely revised the procedure for transferring territory from one district to another. The Montana Supreme Court declared the previous statutes an unconstitutional delegation of legislative authority. In order to assist citizens, school districts and county superintendents, OPI legal staff together with County Superintendents Marsha Davis and Rachel Vielleux prepared a flow chart and sample forms to be used as guides in the transfer process. These documents are available on the OPI website at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/legalDivision/territory.html>



[Petition to Transfer School District Territory](#)



[Resolution of Board of Trustees - Transferring District](#)



[Resolution of Board of Trustees - Receiving District](#)



[Sample Letter re Transferring](#)



[Sample Transfer Order](#)



[Territory Transfer Flow Chart](#)



[Territory Transfer Law](#)

The forms are also available from the OPI Legal Division, (444-3172), Marsha Davis (447-8344), and Rachel Vielleux (523-4860). These territory transfer forms are provided only for your general information and to provide a broad guide in effecting a territory transfer. They should not be relied upon as constituting legal advice or definitive forms. You are urged to seek legal

assistance in drafting explicit forms specific to your particular needs. OPI Contact: Bev Marlow, Paralegal, 444-3172 or [bemarlow@state.mt.us](mailto:bemarlow@state.mt.us).

### Education Licensure: ONLINE License Renewal for Educators

Need to renew your educator license? Teachers, administrators, and specialists can now renew their educator license by visiting the OPI Web page at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/cert/> or by going directly to the renewal application at <https://app.discoveringmontana.com/tcert/main.php>. There will be no more waiting for a new license to be issued. Electronic renewal allows credentials to be updated in the certification system immediately!

There are a few items to consider when renewing online:

- ☐ Educators may not renew until January 1<sup>st</sup> of the year their license expires.
- ☐ Educators shall include a complete listing of the activities completed for renewal.
- ☐ Educators are responsible for maintaining official documentation verifying completion of the renewal activities submitted.

Any renewal application may be subject to audit.

- Those persons selected for audit will be required to submit verification of meeting the renewal activities submitted. If an educator is unable to produce verification within 60 days from the date of the audit letter, the educator's license may be suspended or revoked by the Board of Public Education.

If an educator does not wish to use the online renewal process, the educator must download the **new**, updated renewal application from the OPI Web page.

Online renewals are not possible under the following conditions and must be completed in hard copy.

- ☐ If you need to make a name change. (You should be able to return and renew online approximately one week after updating your name in writing).
- ☐ If you have received any disciplinary action in the past year that must be reported on your Character and Fitness Supplement.
- ☐ If you have not completed sufficient renewal units.

OPI Contact: Margaret Bowles, [mbowles@state.mt.us](mailto:mbowles@state.mt.us), 406-444-2580.

### Assessment

The September edition of the electronic newsletter, **Join Us in Measuring Progress** (JUMP), is online at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/assessment/newsletters/Sept2003AssessNews.pdf>. Also, check out the **Assessment calendar**, which includes current information on important testing dates, deadlines, and training. <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PDF/Assessment/calendar.pdf>

### **2003 Iowa Test Results are Online**

Detailed information about the 2003 Iowa Test Results is available online at: <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/assessment/nrt.html> in PDF format. The website includes an introductory overview that was presented in September at the Board of Public Education meeting, background information, and analysis by subject and by grade. Students in grades four, eight, and eleven were tested in Reading, Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. OPI Contact: Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, 406-444-3656, or [jsnow@state.mt.us](mailto:jsnow@state.mt.us).

**Reminder: Individual Performance Profiles Sent to Schools in May/June 2003**

The Office of Public Instruction purchased a new test result report, the Individual Performance Profile, for grades four, eight, and eleven. These reports were mailed to districts in May and June. The Individual Performance Profile is particularly useful in planning instruction for individual students. This report will give specific information on strengths and weaknesses within the subject areas so classroom planning and instruction can address them. This report can be reviewed and used by teachers and then stored in the cumulative records.

**Preparing for the Criterion-Referenced Test**

The criterion-referenced test developed by Measured Progress, Inc., the Montana Office of Public Instruction, and Montana educators will be administered to students in grades 4, 8, and 10 in reading and math March 29 – April 16, 2004. The test will consist of multiple choice and constructed response items. Since the test is aligned to Montana content standards, continued quality teaching to the standards is the best preparation. In addition, Measured Progress will provide sample items, blueprints, and rubrics. These will be available online by November.

To see samples from a similar test before November, the Wyoming Comprehensive Assessment System (WYCAS) has sample and released items on its website.

- ☐ Sample Items: <http://www.measuredprogress.org/wycas/TestResults/TestResults.htm>
- ☐ Released Items: <http://www.measuredprogress.org/wycas/TestResults/TestResults.htm>

On **November 21**, the Office of Public Instruction will present a statewide videoconference to assist schools in preparing for the test. The October **JUMP** will have more information on the videoconference. OPI Contact: Judy Snow, State Assessment Director, 406-444-3656, or [jsnow@state.mt.us](mailto:jsnow@state.mt.us).

**Measured Progress Professional Development Workshops Scheduled for October**

“Examining Student Work,” a workshop developed by Measured Progress, the testing contractor for the Montana criterion-referenced test (CRT), is being offered during the week of Oct. 6 at five sites. Space is still available at some sites. More information and registration are available online: <http://iregister.measuredprogress.org> or by contacting Nancy Hall at Measured Progress 1-888-792-2741.

Date	Site	Location
October 7	Missoula	Holiday Inn
October 7	Billings	Sheraton Hotel
October 8	Bozeman	Holiday Inn
October 9	Glasgow	Cottonwood Inn
October 9	Great Falls	Best Western Hotel

**“Teacher as Assessor” and “Examining Student Work” Video Tapes**

In December, videotapes of workshops developed and presented by Measured Progress (“Teacher as Assessor,” spring 2003, and “Examining Student Work,” Oct. 2003) will be available for checkout through the Office of Public Instruction Resource Center. Please contact Raelen Williard at the Office of Public Instruction to make arrangements: [rwilliard@state.mt.us](mailto:rwilliard@state.mt.us) or 406-444-2082.

### Educational Opportunity and Equity

The **Hunger and Homelessness Conference** will be held in Helena at the Red Lion Colonial Inn October 7-9, 2003. Keynote speakers will be Dr. Gail Gray, Director of the Montana Department of Public Health and Human Services; Dr. Ruby Payne, President of Aha! Process, Inc.; Phillip Mangano, Executive Director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness; and Dr. Larry Swanson, Associate Director of O'Connor Center for the Rocky Mountain West. There will be various breakout sessions dealing with issues surrounding hunger and homelessness, including ones on October 7 dealing with homeless issues in the school system that is geared to District Homeless Liaisons. The brochure and registration form can be downloaded at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/homeless/HHBrochure03.pdf>.

### **Indian Education for All**

Please remember to fill out and send in the Survey of Activities for American Indian Heritage Day. OPI would like to learn about the activities your district and schools did for American Indian Heritage Day (September 26, 2003). The survey is located at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/IndianEd/Index.html>. The survey should be returned to Lori Falcon, Office of Public Instruction, PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501.

### **Forum on Indian Education and Legal Issues**

The Montana Indian Education Association and the Indian Section of the Montana Bar are sponsoring an Indian Education and Legal Issues Forum November 9-10, 2003, in Great Falls, at the Heritage Inn. The conference runs from 6 pm to 8:30 p.m. on Sunday, November 9 and from 8:30 am to 4 pm on Monday, November 10.

This Forum will explore the various legal issues impacting American Indian Education in Montana. Issues will include curriculum, student achievement, policies/laws, the relationships and responsibilities of Federal-State-Tribal Governments serving American Indian students and families. The agenda will include a number of excellent presenters on the legal issues and legal history surrounding American Indian Education, particularly Article X, 1 (2) of the Montana Constitution.

Who Should Attend? Montana Tribal Leaders, Tribal Education Departments, School Board members, Superintendents, Montana University System leadership, Tribal College leadership, Legal staff, State Legislators, State Education Policy Organizations, BIA Education, school administrators, parent committees, teachers, parents, and any interested individuals.

Contact: Carol Juneau, Chairperson, Montana Indian Education Association, 406-338-5689, [csjuneau@3rivers.net](mailto:csjuneau@3rivers.net).

### **2004 Title I Conference**

The 2004 Title I Conference will be held on February 24-25 at the Heritage Inn Great Falls. A one-day High Priority Schools Institute for school teams from schools identified for corrective action or restructuring will be held on February 23 at the same location. Additional information about the conference agenda and registration will be sent out by November 1. OPI Contact: Gwen Smith, Title I Administrative Assistant, 406-444-5660 or [gsmith@state.mt.us](mailto:gsmith@state.mt.us).

### **K-6 Teachers Eligible for Presidential Award**

Please nominate and encourage good science and mathematics teachers to apply for the Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. This award was established in 1983 and is administered for the White House by the National Science Foundation. Teachers of grades K-6 are eligible to apply for the 2004 award but may not be



self-nominated. Anyone (e.g., principals, teachers, students, and other members of the general public) may nominate a teacher. Teachers' completed applications for the 2004 awards must be postmarked by May 1, 2004. Nomination forms, eligibility requirements and applications are available on the PAEMST Web site, <http://www.nsf.gov/pa>. OPI contact Sharon Mikat, 406-444-0906 or [smikat@state.mt.us](mailto:smikat@state.mt.us).

The Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching (PAEMST) identifies outstanding mathematics and science teachers across the country from kindergarten through 12<sup>th</sup> grade. If chosen by the national selection committee, awardees receive a special citation signed by the President of the United States, a \$10,000 award from the National Science Foundation (NSF), gifts from donors, and a paid trip for two to Washington, D.C. in March to attend special recognition events.

#### Health Enhancement and Safety Division

##### **Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act**

President Bush's No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires school districts to comply with requirements under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232g and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), 20 U.S.C. Section 1232h. Information regarding these requirements can be found on the Office of Public Instruction Web site <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/FederalPrograms/Index.html>. NCLB requires each state to have; "...a procedure in place to facilitate the transfer of disciplinary records, with respect to a suspension or expulsion, by local education agencies to any private or public elementary school or secondary school for any student who is enrolled or seeks, intends, or is instructed to enroll, on a full or part-time basis, in the school."

The Montana Board of Public Education's Administrative Rule 10.55.909(2) requires school districts to establish policies and procedures for the use and transfer of student records that are in compliance with state and federal laws governing individual privacy.

Montana Code Annotated (MCA) 20-1-213 requires that LEAs and accredited schools adopt a policy that a certified copy of the permanent file, special education records and records of disciplinary actions taken against the student that are educationally-related, be transferred to an LEA or accredited school where the student seeks to enroll within 5 days of the request.

NCLB requires that disciplinary records relating to suspension and expulsion be included in the permanent file and that the district have in place a policy to transfer student records to any public or private school that the student seeks to enroll within five working days after receipt of the request. **The major new requirement for Montana schools is the addition of private schools.** (Section 4155 of ESEA, 20 U.S.C. Section 7165, as amended by NCLB)

Please review your district's record transfer policies to confirm they are in compliance with NCLB. If they are not, we urge your district's board to adjust them accordingly. The Montana School Boards Association may have draft policies available for your use. Contact Bob Vogel (442-0045) or email [bvogel@mtsba.org](mailto:bvogel@mtsba.org).

#### School Nutrition Program

**Severe Need Breakfast** documentation must be submitted to School Nutrition Programs by November 8 to continue to receive Severe Need Breakfast reimbursement. For more information: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501.

### **Walk to School Day**

The annual Walk to School Day is October 8, 2003. This fun event is an optimal time to encourage children not only to include physical activity in their day, but also to eat a healthful breakfast. Schools participating in the School Breakfast Program offer parents a time effective, nutritious solution to hurried mornings where there doesn't seem to be time for a healthful meal. For more information or promotion ideas, contact: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501.

### **National School Lunch Week: "GET WILD ABOUT SCHOOL LUNCH"**

October 13-17, 2003. The Montana Team Nutrition Program has developed a tool to help in celebrating and promoting school lunch this week. For more information: Team Nutrition Program, Montana State University, Attn: Katie Bark, (406) 994-5641, [kbark@state.mt.us](mailto:kbark@state.mt.us).

### **National Dairy Council Grant Winners**

The *Dairy Makes a Difference* Grant Award Winners were announced in September of 2003. These grants will help schools achieve greater dairy consumption among their students in order to promote optimal bone health and good overall nutrition. Montana schools that received this award are Glendive Public Schools in Glendive, Hellgate Elementary in Missoula, Jefferson Elementary in Helena, Missoula County Health Department in Missoula, Monforton School in Bozeman, Montana City School in Clancy, and Rocky Boy School in Box Elder. Congratulations to all award winners! For more information: Western Dairy Council, 12000 North Washington, Suite 200, Thornton, Colorado 80241, (800) 274-6455, [www.wdairycouncil.com](http://www.wdairycouncil.com).

### **Healthy Schools, Healthy Kids**

Senate Joint Resolution Number 2, a resolution supporting healthy school nutrition environments in Montana, is now available on the School Nutrition Programs website. To access this document, go to the Montana School Nutrition Programs website at <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/schoolfood/index.html>. Click on the pull-down menu titled, "Fresh Bytes." Click on "Senate Joint Resolution No. 2." For more information or to request trainings contact: School Nutrition Programs, (406) 444-2501.

### **Defeating Diabetes in School Food Service Programs In Native American Communities**

October 28, 2003 – Billings ~ October 30, 2003 - Great Falls. Two regional workshops will be held for food service personnel working in schools on or near Native American communities. The workshops are free but schools must register to attend. Registration information will be mailed early in October. For more information: Team Nutrition Program, Montana State University, Attn: Molly Stenberg, (406) 994-5641, [stenberg@montana.edu](mailto:stenberg@montana.edu).

### **HIV/AIDS Outstanding Educator Award**

The OPI's HIV/AIDS Program is accepting nominations from administrators for recognition of teachers and/or peer educators who provide extraordinary efforts and learning experiences in regards to HIV/AIDS prevention education. If you have someone deserving of this award please send a letter of nomination to Susan Court, OPI, PO Box 202501, Helena, MT 59620-2501. The OPI will make the awards in observance of World AIDS Day on December 1, 2003 with an on-site presentation and ceremony. The deadline for nominations is Thursday, October 30.

### **2003 Youth Risk Behavior Survey**

Over 20,000 Montana students in grades 7-12 participated in the 2003 YRBS. School-specific data is available at [www.opi.state.mt.us](http://www.opi.state.mt.us). Click on the IRIS tab at the top of the page to enter password and username. Trend data and frequency distributions are available for every year a school district has participated in the YRBS. The *High School* and *Grades 7-8* reports will be sent to participating districts in October. All the reports, trend data, regional data, and



comparison tables are available at [www.opi.state.mt.us/YRBS](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/YRBS). The success of the YRBS is a direct result of the eighty-seven percent of responding Montana school districts that voluntarily participate. For more information contact Susan Court at 406-444-3178 or [scourt@state.mt.us](mailto:scourt@state.mt.us).

### **Mind & Body**

*Mind & Body* is a compilation of physical activities for the elementary classroom. This hand-sized book has been distributed to all elementary school principals in the state. Classroom teachers who do not have access to a health enhancement specialist are finding *Mind & Body* to be extremely useful. The overwhelming demand for *Mind & Body* has resulted in a second printing; the books should be available in 6-8 weeks. For additional copies of *Mind & Body* contact Susan Court at 406-444-3178 or [scourt@state.mt.us](mailto:scourt@state.mt.us).

### School Finance and Pupil Transportation

#### **October 6 Enrollment Count**

The Fall Enrollment Count date is Monday, October 6, 2003. Students enrolled in the district, including gender and ethnicity information by grade level and school, must be reported to OPI. Information about ANB and instructions for entering the report on the MAEFAIRS electronic system are posted at: [http:// www.opi.state.mt.us/SchoolFinance/Enrollment.html](http://www.opi.state.mt.us/SchoolFinance/Enrollment.html). Enrollment reports must be submitted no later than October 17, 2003. Send a copy of your submitted report to your county superintendent.

#### **"10 Day Rule"**

A district may not count a student as enrolled if that student has been absent, with or without excuse, for 11 consecutive school days immediately preceding and including the official count dates (October 6, 2003 and February 2, 2004). Even if the student has not missed 10 days as of the count date, a district cannot count the student if: 1) the student has enrolled in another district; OR 2) the district has received notice verbally or in writing that the student will no longer be attending; OR 3) the student had records transferred to another school; OR 4) the student is otherwise unable to continue attendance (death, detention, etc.) (ARM 10.20.102)  
OPI Contact: Tal Redpath, (406) 444-3024, [redpath@state.mt.us](mailto:redpath@state.mt.us).

#### **Fall Enrollment to be Reported through IRIS**

The MAEFAIRS electronic reporting system has moved to the IRIS system (i.e., accessible through the IRIS tab on the OPI website) for Fall Enrollment (October 2003). OPI has sent instructions and a CD to registered MAEFAIRS users for reporting enrollment after the October 6 count date. OPI Contact: Nica Carte, (406) 444-4401, [ncarte@state.mt.us](mailto:ncarte@state.mt.us).

#### **New Clerk Training Scheduled for November**

The Montana Association of School Business Officials (MASBO) will hold a training session for new district clerks on November 13 and 14, 2003, in Helena. Any interested clerks, superintendents, or county superintendents are encouraged to attend. There is a charge for the workshop. Contact: Lynda Brannon, Executive Director of MASBO, (406) 442-5599 or [masbo@in-tch.com](mailto:masbo@in-tch.com).

#### **FY 2003-04 Bus Route Forms**

TR-1 Bus Route Forms are due to the County Superintendent by October 1 and to OPI by October 15.

- Forms were pre-filled with last year's bus information and posted at <http://www.metnet.state.mt.us/schoolfinance/0000D9D9-80000007/00017A9B-80000007/>.

- Blank forms are under <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/PupilTransport/index.html>
- An optional OPI form (TR-2) is available to help track students on each route, <http://www.opi.state.mt.us/pdf/pupiltransport/TR-2.pdf>.

OPI contact: Maxine Mougeot, (406) 444-3096 or [mmougeot@state.mt.us](mailto:mmougeot@state.mt.us).

### **Federal Grants Awarded to Nine Montana Schools for School Facilities**

Nine Montana schools will share nearly \$10 million in federal impact aid grants. The schools applied for the competitive grants in 2002. The grants are specific to repair, remodeling or new construction of school facilities. The schools that received the grants, the amounts and the purpose for the grants are as follows:

Browning Elementary	\$2,152,120	Construction of a new elementary school at Baab
Wyola Elementary	\$ 104,250	Replace a faulty fire safety system and eliminate degraded asbestos floor tiles in the gym
Rocky Boy Elementary	\$1,153,800	Replace the roof and damaged interior ceilings and upgrade the electrical and fire safety systems
Box Elder Elementary	\$1,646,600	Construction of an additional eight classrooms
Hays/Lodge Pole K-12	\$3,692,918	Complete construction of a replacement elementary school
Wolf Point Elementary	\$ 105,778	Remove/replace deteriorated asbestos floor tiles
Brockton HS District	\$ 568,161	Repair a roof and replace the heating, ventilation and cooling system
Harlem Elementary	\$ 468,612	Emergency repairs and upgrades
Dixon Elementary	\$ 60,100	Repairs - health and safety needs

### Special Education Division

#### **Project Vision**

Project Vision is a collaborative personnel development-training project that is implemented through Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas. The purpose of the project is to help ensure that there is an adequate supply of orientation and mobility specialists and teachers with the knowledge set and skills to work with students who are visually impaired or blind. Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Washington and Texas are participating members of this interstate training consortium that is funded through the U.S. Department of Education.

The project utilizes distance-learning systems that allow teachers to receive their training while still working in their home districts. Teachers enrolled in the project who complete the required coursework can obtain a certificate from the university as a Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI), a Certified Orientation and Mobility (COM) specialist or a dual certificate of Teacher of the Visually Impaired/Certified Orientation/Mobility specialist (TVI/COM). Additional coursework is also available if the enrolled teacher wishes to pursue a master's degree. Project funds provide for the full cost of tuition and fees.

If you are a certified teacher, enjoy a challenge, like working with other professionals and want to gain expertise in working with students with visual impairments or blindness, this is an exciting training opportunity.

More information on the program and the program application are available by going to the following Web site: [www.oit.sfasu.edu/faculty/dmrcer/nw/home.htm](http://www.oit.sfasu.edu/faculty/dmrcer/nw/home.htm). The deadline for enrolling in Project Vision is November 3, 2003. Classes will begin in January.

If you have specific questions regarding this project or of working as a teacher of the visually impaired or blind or as an orientation and mobility specialist in Montana, please call Steve Gettel, Superintendent of Montana School for the Deaf and the Blind, at (406) 771-6000, or Marilyn Pearson, Assistant Director of Special Education, OPI, at (406) 444-4428.

### **Free Access for Montana Schools to the 2003-2004 NASDSE Satellite Series**

OPI's Division of Special Education has subscribed to the 2003-2004 National Association of State Directors of Special Education Satellite Series, "Achieving Better Results Through Policy and Practice" for our state.

#### **Achieving Better Results Through Policy and Practice**

- ☐ SEPTEMBER 17, 2003 - 1:00-3:00 p.m. (ET) *Serving Low-Incidence Children in a High Standards Environment*
- ☐ NOVEMBER 19, 2003 – 1:00-3:00 p.m. (ET) *The New IDEA: What it Says and What it Means for States and Schools*
- ☐ MARCH 10, 2004 – 1:00-3:00 p.m. (ET) *The Pennsylvania Community of Practice in Support of Transition*
- ☐ MAY 5, 2004 – 1:00-3:00 p.m. (ET) *School-Based Mental Health*

OPI is also offering Reading Rockets/NASDSE Satellite Special Edition Conference Series, "Achieving Success in Reading." With the emphasis on Effective Reading Programs, Making Parents Partners and Teaching English Language Learners to Read, this satellite series should assist in meeting many needs for our state. The series also assists with connecting special education and general education.

#### **Achieving Success in Reading**

- ☐ OCTOBER 15, 2003 – 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (ET) *Establishing an Effective Reading Program*
- ☐ FEBRUARY 18, 2004 – 12:00 p.m.- 1:30 p.m. (ET) *Making Parents Partners*
- ☐ MARCH 17, 2004 – 12:00 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. (ET) *Teaching English Language Learners to Read*

OPI Contact: Susan Bailey-Anderson, 444-2046, [sbanderson@state.mt.us](mailto:sbanderson@state.mt.us)

### Career, Technical and Adult Education

#### **ASVAB – Armed Forces Vocational Aptitude Battery**

For high school juniors and seniors, making decisions about their future after high school can often be complicated and challenging. Teachers and counselors will need to help provide them with resources to inform them about the opportunities that await them and ways they can make the best possible decisions. Ultimately, each high school student will need to embark on that journey from high school into the world of work and career.

The **ASVAB Career Exploration Program** can help student make these big decisions. The ASVAB, used by hundreds of thousands of high school students in over 14,000 schools nationwide is one of the most widely used and highly regarded career development programs in

the world. This program is provided free of charge to schools and students. The ASVAB consists of eight tests and takes about 3 hours to complete. Career Counselors can use the scores to help students explore potential careers in both the military and civilian worlds of work.

If you are interested in this free assessment tool, contact: Richard Railson, Education Services Specialist, Butte MEPS, 22 West Park Street, Butte, MT 59701, (800) 323-0513, (406) 723-9276, E-mail: [butes@meecom.army.mil](mailto:butes@meecom.army.mil).

#### Teachers Should Save Receipts for Educators' Deduction

As the new school year begins, the Internal Revenue Service reminds teachers and other educators to save their receipts for purchases of books and classroom supplies. These out-of-pocket expenses may lower their 2003 taxes.

The deduction is available to eligible educators in public or private elementary or secondary schools. To be eligible, a person must work at least 900 hours during a school year as a teacher, instructor, counselor, principal or aide.

Taxpayers may subtract up to \$250 of qualified expenses when figuring their adjusted gross income (AGI) for 2003. This deduction is available whether or not the taxpayer itemizes deductions on Schedule A.

The IRS suggests that educators keep records of qualifying expenses in a folder or envelope with a label such as "Educator Expenses Deduction," noting the date, amount and purpose of each purchase. This will help prevent a missed deduction at tax time.

This is scheduled to be the last year for this deduction. Last year's Job Creation and Worker Assistance Act put it in place for 2002 and 2003 only.

For more information, call the IRS Tele-Tax system toll-free at 1-800-829-4477 and select Topic 458, or read it online.

#### Art Mobile of Montana

The Art Mobile of Montana provides a statewide traveling art outreach program for schools. Participants receive presentations of high quality, original art exhibits and art lessons. Teacher education workshops are also available. Art exhibits arrive on a van and are displayed in a school or other public building. Exhibits represent a range of artists, including Native American. Executive Director Sara Colburn is a professional art educator, art teacher, and artist. Sara facilitates an interactive presentation about the exhibit and discussion about the value of the arts. Presentations help educate through art about the diversity of the human experience, cultures, practices, customs, and history.

Art mobile lessons are hands-on, offering experiences with various media such as pastel landscape drawing, watercolor, drawing, and printmaking using recycled materials. Lessons are often combined with a variety of writing exercises or storytelling; or with curriculum written for the artworks. Lessons follow the Montana Performance Standards for the Arts. Curriculum is aligned with required criteria for the Montana Arts Council as part of their task to help satisfy grant guidelines for the National Endowment for the Arts: Promoting art in underserved communities, expanding access to arts education, working with Pre-K and beyond, promoting the quality of arts education programs in Montana. For inquiries and scheduling, contact Sara Colburn 406 683-2999 or [scolburn@bmt.net](mailto:scolburn@bmt.net).